A Study of W. Faulkner's *Light in August*

by Junichi Nakamura

I MAIN CHARACTERS

Joseph Christmas was Milly Hines's illegitimate son by a "Mexican" in the circus. But the parents were both dead when he was born. His father was shot to death by Hines, Milly's father, and his mother died in the agony of childbirth, because Hines would not call in a doctor. Soon after his birth he was left on the doorstep of an orphanage on Christmas eve. Other children called him nigger and the dietitian said that she knew that, too.

Joe Christmas's upbringing at the McEacherns, into which he was adopted at the age of five, made what he was. What McEachern, "ruthless man who had never known either pity or doubt," tried to teach the little boy was "that the two abominations are sloth and idle thinking, the two virtues are work and the fear of God."[1]

At eight Joe revolted against McEachern's hard Presbyterianism. He was taken to church and was forced to learn catechism. As McEachern tried to teach him catechism, his voice was not unkind but "not human, personal, at all. It was just cold, implacable, like written or printed words." (p. 130) Whipping followed. As the boy revolted, his face was "rigid with pride perhaps and despair. Or maybe it was vanity, the stupid vanity of a man." (p. 130) He came to hate religion.[2]

Later McEachern accused Joe of sloth, ingratitude, irreverence, blasphemy, lying, and lechery. In his foster father's home Joe had hard work, punishment and injustice.[3] Yet there was another thing he hated more than these. "It was the woman: that soft kindness which he believed himself doomed to be forever victim of and which he hated worse than he did the

hard and ruthless justice of man." (p. 147) This was reaction against Mrs. McEachern, who "was dressed, in black, with a bonnet—a small woman, entering timidly, a little hunched, with a beaten face and who looked fifteen years older than the rugged and vigorous husband." Joe experienced "long series of trivial, clumsy, vain efforts born of frustration and fumbling and dumn instinct" (p. 146) on this woman's part.[4] He could not appreciate Mrs. McEachern's womanly kindness, but revolted against it.

At first he saw girls only at church, on Sunday. They were associated with Sunday and with church. So he could not notice them. But he and the other boys, with whom he hunted and fished on Saturday afternoons, talked about girls. At fourteen he was to copulate with a negro girl with other boys in a mill shed, but when his turn came, he kicked and beat her.

Joe Christmas had a kind of humility toward women outside of his family. At seventeen he allowed himself to be attracted by Bobbie Allen, waitress—he was too innocent to find her a whore till some time after he became her lover—at a restaurant, where he was taken by McEachern by mistake. It was because of her smallness. If she had been a big woman, he would not have dared, thinking, "It won't be any use. She will already have a fellow, a man." It was after he had been her lover for a month that he had ever seen a naked woman. It was at this time that he began to smoke and drink and dance. Once they had to put him to bed, helpless, in the house where he had not even dreamed at one time that he could enter.

During the fifteen years of wandering, which followed his killing his foster father, always, sooner or later he went to professional women and paid them when he had the money, and when he did not have it, he bedded anyway and then told them that he was a negro and tried to get by in that way. Soon after coming to Jefferson, he began to visit Miz Burden's bedroom.

Sometimes "he would waken her with his hard brutal hand and sometimes take her as hard and as brutally before she was good awake." And later as he visited Memphis, he betrayed Miz Burden with other women, women bought for a price.

The years of wandering hardened him. It followed his killing his father-in-law and being knocked down unconscious in the whore house. It was "with his bloody head and his empty stomach hot, savage, and courageous with whiskey," that he entered the street which was to run for fifteen years. "He thought that it was loneliness which he was trying to escape and not himself. But the street ran on: catlike, one place was the same as another to him. But in none of them could he be quiet. But the street ran on in its moods and phases, always empty..." (p. 197) He was always found with his still, hard face and in the clothes (even when soiled and worn) of a city man. He was in his inevitable serge clothing and light shoes black with bottomless mud. The street ran into Oklahoma, Missouri, Mexico, Chicago, Detroit and then Mississippi. He was in turn a laborer, miner, prospector, gambling tout; enlisted in the army, served four months and deserted. He had "past all the imperceptible corners of bitter defeats and more bitter victories, and five miles even beyond a corner where he used to wait in the terrible early time of love, for someone whose name he had forgot." (p. 201) When he finally came to the planer's mill in Jefferson, "there was something definitely rootless about him, as though no town nor city was his, no street, no walls no square of earth his home." (p. 27) As time went on in Jefferson and the novelty of the second phase with Miz Burden began to wear off and become habit, "he would stand in the kitchen door and look out across the dusk and see, perhaps with foreboding and premonition, the savage and lonely street which he had chosen of his own will, waiting for him, thinking *This is not my life, I dont belong here.*"

(p. 225)

Christmas had a little negro blood in him; so little that in most cases people did not notice the fact.[5] But it was in the area where negroes were so prejudiced against that even a marshall said, when Brown hinted at Christmas's having some negro blood in him, "You better be careful what you are saying, if it is a white man you are talking about—I don't care if he is a murderer or not." Realizing the way white women reacted when they found out that they had bedded with a negro, Christmas dared visit a whore house when he was penniless and tried to get by saying that he was a negro, when the paying time came. He was prepared for the cursing from the woman and the matron of the house, though now and then he was beaten unconscious by other patrons, to waken later in the street or in the jail.

But later he met a white woman who took a man with a black skin. This experience was such a shock to him that it made him sick for two years. Then a change came over him. Now he fought the negro who called him white. His life with negroes was as follows:

> He lived with Negroes, shunning white people. He ate with them, slept with them, belligerent, unpredictable, uncommunicative. He now lived as man and wife with a woman who resembled an ebony carving. At night he would lie in bed beside her, sleepless, beginning to breathe deep and hard. He would do it deliberately, feeling, even watching, his white chest arch deeper and deeper within his ribcage, trying to breathe into himself the dark odor, the dark and inscrutable thinking and being of Negroes, with each suspiration trying to expel from himself the white blood and the white thinking and being. And all the while his nostrils at the odor which he was trying to make his own would whiten and tauten, his whole being writhe and strain with physical outrage and spiritual denial. (p. 197)

Once he called white people "white bastards." Yet he had no interest in the work among negroes. When urged by Miz Burden, he declined.

Christmas's characteristic trait after his long wandering may be summarized as "isolation." He was neither large nor tall but he "contrived somehow to look more lonely than a lone telephone pole in the middle of a desert. In the wide, empty, shadow-brooded street he looked like a phantom, a spirit, strayed out of its own world, and lost." (p. 99) "His face was gaunt, the flesh a level dead parchment color" and he with "his dark, insufferable face and his whole air of cold and quiet contempt" "looked sullen and quiet and fatal as a snake." He kept himself aloof from others living in a tumble down negro cabin, at the back of Miz Burden's old colonial plantation house two miles from town. He was not to beg help from others. So, though it was a negro's job at the planing mill he "worked well enough, with a kind of baleful and restrained steadiness"; he "worked with that brooding and savage steadiness." He earned money on his own, even by bootlegging—holding up a truck loaded with whiskey—and when he thought he had enough money, he stopped working at the mill one Saturday night, without warning.

When he thought his last came, he was resigned and gave up himself willingly to those who came to capture or kill him. While running away from the pursuit of bloodhounds, the sound and fury of the hunt, he breathed deep and slow, feeling with each breath himself diffuse in the neutral grayness, becoming one with loneliness and quiet that had never known fury or despair. He thought in a quiet and slow amazement, "That was all I wanted,...That was all, for thirty years. That didn't seem to be a whole lot to ask in thirty years." And when he appeared in Mottstown, he was prepared. He never resisted when he was arrested.

Just before collapsing of shots and stabs, Christmas for a long moment looked up at those who pursued him "with peaceful and unfathomable and unbearable eyes." (407)

Christmas's intellectual level is shown in his reading page by page "a magazine of that type whose covers bear either pictures of young women in underclothes or pictures of men in the act of shooting one another with pistols."

As the reader tries to picture him recollectidg all that is described of Christmas, his impression is that the character is a little loose. Outwardly some things that happen to him corre spond to what is reported of Jesus Christ: his birth, his appearing at thirty-three years of age, his death, and his body's seeming to rise into the sky, etc. However, there is nothing in common in character between the two.

Nathaniel Burrington—not pronounced "Burden" yet—minister is the farthest back that can be traced of Joanna Burden. The youngest of this minister's ten children, Calvin Burden, is Joanna's grandfather. He ran away from home at twelve and went to California by boat; turned Catholic and came back to St. Louis, Mo. ten years later; married the daughter of a family of Huguenot stock and gave up Catholicism.

When the boy—Joanna's father—was about five, Burden killed a man in an argument over slavery and had to take his family and move westward to Jefferson "to get away from Democrats," as he said. At times he came home still full of straight whiskey and waked his son the—mother was dead now and there were three daughters—with his hard hand. "I'll learn you to hate two things," he would say, "or I'll frail the tar out of you.

And those things are hell and slaveholders."

He and his grandson, Calvin—Joanna's half brother, then twenty years old—were killed on the square by an exslaveowner and Confederate soldier, Sartoris, over a question of negro votes in a slave election. That was sixty years ago. Joanna's father explained the above to her and taught her as follows:

〔they were〕 murdered not by one white man but by the curse which God put on a whole race before your grandfather or your brother or me or you were even thought. of A race doomed and cursed to be forever and ever a part of the white race's doom and curse for its sins. Remember that. His doom and his curse. Forever and ever. Mine. Your mother's. Yours even though you are a child. The curse of every white child that ever was born and that ever will be born. None can escape it. (p. 221)

You must struggle, rise. But in order to rise, you must raise the shadow with you. But you can never lift it to your level. I see that now, which I did not see until I came down here. But escape it you cannot. The curse of the black race is God's curse. But the curse of the white race is the black man who will be forever God's chosen own because He once cursed Him. (p. 222)

Joanna Burden was born in the big Burden house standing in the woods two miles away from Jefferson and had lived there ever since, all alone for the last twenty years. Yet she was still a stranger with New England accent, a foreigner whose people moved in from the North during Reconstruction; no white person had been seen in the house for years. She was a Yankee, a lover of negroes, about whom in the town there was still talk of queer relations with negroes in the town and out of it. People described her as follows: "Visits them when they are sick, like they was white. Wont have a cook because it

would have to be a nigger cook. Folks say she claims that niggers are the same as white folks." (p. 46)

She wrote many replies—advice, business, financial and religious—to the administration and faculty and to young girl students and alumnae of a dozen negro schools and colleges through the South. She made visits to those schools, too. Her business affairs were conducted by a negro lawyer in Memphis.

Joe Christmas, who appeared when she was forty-one years old and came in possession of her body, saw another side of her life. He remembered "the hard, untearful and unselfpitying and almost manlike yielding of that surrender" and also "A dual personality: the one the woman at first sight of whom...there had opened before him,...a horizon of physical security and adultery if not pleasure; the other the mantrained muscles and the mantrained habit of thinking born of heritage and environment with which he had to fight up to the final instant. There was no feminine vacillation, no coyness of obvious desire and intention to succumb at last. It was as if he struggled physically with another man for an object of no actual value to either, and for which they struggled on principle alone." (p. 205)

Later, a change came over her. She showed "an avidity for the forbidden wordsymbols; an insatiable appetite for the sound of them on his tongue and on her own. She revealed the terrible and impersonal curiosity of a child about forbidden subjects and objects; that rapt and tireless and detached interest of a surgeon in the physical body and its possibilities." (p. 226) "Christmas watched her pass through every avatar of a woman in love. Soon she more than shocked him: she astonished and bewildered him." (p. 226) "Now and then she appointed trysts beneath certain shrubs about the grounds, where he would find her naked, or with her clothing half torn to ribbons upon her, in the wild throes of nymphomania, her body gleaming in the slow shifting from one to another of such formally erotic attitudes and

gestures as a Beardsley of the time of Petronius might have drawn." (p. 227)

After two years this phase was over; she was becoming too old. Now she wanted Christmas to go to college and take over her work for negroes. Upon Christmas's refusal she tried to kill him but was killed herself.

Somehow Gail Hightower had set his mind to serve in Jefferson since he had first decided to become a minister and he managed to go to the Presbyterian church—perhaps the principal church—there directly from the seminary. It was twenty-five years ago.

Hightower's sermons were peculiar. He could not get religion and the Civil War—galloping cavalry and his dead grandfather shot from the galloping horse—untangled from each other even in the pulpit.[6] When his wife, who acted like an insane woman, was sent away to a sanatorium, the parsonage was in a mess. He seemed to eat like an animal—just when he got hungry and just whatever he could find. Every two weeks he would visit his wife; returned after a day or so. In the pulpit he was the same and it was as though the whole thing had never happened.

Even after his wife's scandalous death which was given much publicity, he would not resign but kept on preaching "with that rapt fury which they [his church people] considered sacrilege and which those from the other churches believed to be out and out insanity." (p. 59) He resigned only when he found the church door locked. Yet, he would not leave Jefferson despite threats on the part of K.K.K. He lived in what the town called "his disgrace—the house unpainted, small, obscure, poorly lighted, mansmelling, manstale." (p. 42)

Hightower was criticized and persecuted because of his attitude toward negroes. Realizing that the cook whom Hightower

kept with him after his wife's death was a woman, some said that his wife had gone bad and committed suicide "becauss he was not a natural husband, a natural man, and that the negro woman was the reason." (p. 61) The negro woman had to quit. When he hired a negro man to cook for him after a while, it was the same. K.K.K. whipped the negro and beat Hightower unconscious. When he helped a negro woman in a difficult childbirth in which the child died because she could not get any medical help, rumor went around that the child was his and that he had let it die deliberately. But he bore all this with patience.

Hightower showed sympathy with despised people. As soon as he got his church, he forwarded a small income he inherited from his father promptly on receipt of the quarterly checks to an institution for delinquent girls in Memphis. And when he lost the church, the bitterest thing which he believed that he had ever faced---more bitter even than the bereavement and the shame—was the letter which he wrote them to say that from then on he could send them but half the sum which he had previously sent. He was the only person in whom that peculiarly conscientious and religious man Byron Bunch, confided. He read a great deal: books of religion and history and science of whose very existence Byron had never heard. He is described as follows:

His face is at once gaunt and flabby; it is as though there were two faces, one imposed upon the other, looking out from beneath the pale, bald skull surrouneded by a fringe of gray hair, from behind the twin motionless glares of his spectacles. That part of his torso visible above the desk is shapeless, almost monstrous, with a soft and sedentary obesity. He sits rigid; on his face now that expression of denial and flight has become definite. (p. 77)

When Mrs. Hightower came to Jefferson, she was "a small,

quietlooking girl who at first the town thought just had nothing to say for herself." (p. 53) But the neighbors would hear her weeping in the parsonage in the afternoon or late at night. Some thought that the husband would not know what to do about it because he did not know what was wrong. After about a year in Jefferson, she began to wear a frozen look on her fece. Some claimed that he couldn't or wouldn't satisfy her himself and that he knew what she was doing in Memphis.

Sometimes she would not even come to the church. Once in the middle of her husband's sermon she screamed, shaking her hands towards the pulpit. People did not know whether she was shaking her hands at her husband or at God. She was sent to a sanatorium. When she came back she looked better; chastened; awake. But later she jumped or fell from a hotel window in Memphis and was dead. She was registered under a fictitious name as a wife of a man who was drunken.

Byron Bunch came to Jefferson seven years ago and has been working at a planing mill. He will not see thirty again, and is "the slight nondescript man who is utterly unaware that he is a man of mystery among his fellow workers." (p. 42) He works on Saturday afternoons, alone; then goes back to Mrs. Beard's boarding house shortly after six o'clock and after supper saddles the mule which he stables in a shed behind the house which Bunch himself patched up and roofed. He rides thirty miles into the country and spends Sunday leading the choir in a country church—a service which lasts all day long. Then some time around midnight he saddles the mule again and rides back to Jefferson at a steady allnight jog.

Two or three nights a week Bunch visits Hightower and talks with him quietly. If there had been love once, man or woman would have said that Bunch had forgotten her. Or she

him, more likely. Yet he falls in love with Lena in her pregnancy almost at first sight and does all he can for her. It is a selfless love. He is a conscientious man and can give himself up to a cause or person once he is inspired.

Lena Grove was brought up in a very poor family and was uneducated. When she was twelve years old both her father and mother died in the same summer and she went to live with her brother, McKinley, who was twenty years her senior; a hard man without softness, gentleness, or youth. She had lived there eight years before she opened the window to go out at night for the first time. Soon she discovered that she was pregnant. She said to herself, "That's just my luck." McKinley called her whore. She left her brother's home with only thirty-five cents, looking for the man who had deserted her.

She was pleasantfaced, candid, friendly, and alert. She was very simple and trusting; she started out to look for Lucas when she had no idea where he was. She said, "He said he would stay if I said so,.... But I said for him to go," and "I told him I would not expect him to write, being as he ain't any hand for letters." She kept on saying, "He's going to send for me," unshakable, sheeplike with patient and steadfast fidelity, and also "I reckon the Lord will see to that."

Lucas Burch first worked at Doane's mill, Ala. He was gay and liked to talk. He seduced Lena Grove and when he found that she was pregnant, he ran away, promising her that he would send her word when he was ready. "He had an alert, weakly handsome face with a small white scar beside the mouth that looked as if it had been contemplated a great deal in the mirror, and a way of jerking his head quickly and glancing over his

shoulder like a mule does in front of an automobile in the road," (pp. 31-32) showing that he was haunted by someone who might approach him from behind.

He worked some, after a fashion. Byron Bunch belived that there was not even enough left of him to do a good, shrewd job of shirking. He lost his entire first week's pay in a crap game on the first Saturday night. He could not be expected to be good at anything.

He talked much about who he was and where he had been, but nobody believed him. "On Monday morning as likely as not he would appear in the same soiled clothes of last week, and with a black stubble that had known no razor. And he would be more noisy than ever, shouting and playing the pranks of a child of ten." (p. 36)

When Lucas began to help Christmas in bootlegging, he brought liquor right into town, while Christmas used to make people come way out to the woods back of Miz Burden's house. He got drunken himself. When Christmas got a new car, he had to drive it aroud town to show off. When he knew that one thousand dollars were to be given for prize to the person who caught the man that killed Miz Burden, he came out to the town square wildly yelling that it was Christmas that killed her and making claim on the prize, without realizing that he was himself in danger of being arrested as an accomplice—he had been found drunken in the burning house—and at least for bootlegging.

Hines became janitor of an orphanage just when his daughter's illegitimate baby—later to be called Christmas—was found on the doorstep of the institution. Indeed, it was he who left the baby there. The dietitian felt that he came to the orphanage just to watch and hate the baby. "If the child had been older he would perhaps have thought *He hates me and fears me. So much*

so that he cannot let me out of his sight. (p. 120)

"He was a hard man, in his prime; a man who should have been living a hard and active life, and whom time, circumstance, something, had betrayed, sweeping the hale body and thinking of a man of fortyfive into a backwater suitable for a man of sixty or sixtyfive....His eyes were quite clear, quite gray, quite cold. They were quite mad, too." (pp. 110-11)

He read the Bible, being conscious of God's revelation and punishment, and said "I have lived under it [the Lord's remorseful hand] for five years, watching and waiting for His own good time, because my sin is greater than your sin." (p. 112)

He ran away with Christmas one night, but when found and brought back, he was gone forever, almost.

Joe Christmas's character is a little grotesque, in some points nonhuman, as is seen in his stubbornness in refusing to eat or his relation with Miz Burden. And this may be said about such important characters of the novel as Gail Hightower and Miz Burden, although they are not fully described and the reader is given only glimpses of their actions and reactions. Mrs. Hightower although a minor character, may be grouped with the persons mentioned above in her eccentricity.

Lena Grove's charactor is rather blank. Her going on the road without any knowlege of Lucas's whereabouts is almost superhuman. This is Faulkner's way of carrying characters to the extreme. Lucas is most alive and vivid as a character. With Lucas and Byron the scene becomes more lively.

Most of the men characters seem to be obsessed by religion. Gail Hightower, minister by profession, insisted on preaching

in his fantastic way till the congregation refused to stay with him and locked up the church against him.

McEachern's cold and nearly fanatical Presbyterianism drove Joe Christmas to desperation and murder. Joe Christmas, while escaping after he killed Miz Burden, burst up a negro revival meeting cursing God in the pulpit. Byron Bunch is not a fanatic but unusual in his service as a choir leader in a distant country church. And he kept this secret from everybody except Hightower. For Hines a bit of negro blood in his grandson was God's punishment.

Most of the women characters seem to be obsessed by sex. Mrs. Hightower suffered most from sexual frustration and died of it. Miz Burden showed every sign of a nymphomaniac for a period of time. Lena Grove gives the reader an impression of a female instinct incarnate. She began to go out at night led by instinct. She did not seem to be ashamed of her pregnancy. And by instinct she was led to where her man escaped. In her case it might be said that she was not obsessed by sex but she was herself sex in woman. Milly Hines was of the same kind as Lena, but she was cursed to death because of her father's sense of propriety and hatred of negro blood. In the case of dietitian, woman's anxiety in sex rather than sexual desire is described.

II APPRECIATION

Geographically speaking, Jefferson, Miss. is the center of this novel, more strongly so than in other Yoknapatawpha stories. Characters seem as if they were doomed to gather there.

Lena Grove, first character to appear before the reader, is on her way to this city. She has come all the way from Alabama.

Her unfaithful lover, in deserting her, had fled to this city. Byron Bunch had settled in this town seven years before. The Burdens, after all the wanderings across the continent, settled there and the last of the family was killed in this city. Gail Hightower somehow wanted to be appointed in Jefferson when he finished his seminary and he would not leave the place even when threatened with death. Joe Christmas, too, after fifteen years of wandering, settled in this town and was killed there.

Hightower, who would not leave Jefferson, is a kind of center among the characters. Most of the characters resort to his neglected house. At the end Christmas makes it the place for his final rest after long years of wandering. In a sense Hightower is an observer in Lena-Byron-Christmas case and in the last chapter but one he indulges in a long recollection.

Such characters as Miz Burden, Gail Hightower, and Joe Christmas suffer from what happened in the past: the race problem and its climax, the Civil War. The migrations of Burden family, although reported very briefly, are quite suggestive of the history of the South. The last member of this family, Joanna Burden, is described as "a foreigner whose people moved in from the North during Reconstruction." And Joanna was taught repeatedly of "the curse which God put" on the black race.

Minister Hightower was not able to escape from the recollection of the Civil War – galloping cavalry and his dead grandfather shot from the galloping horse. He had natural sympathy with negroes and suffered for keeping negro servants and helping a negro woman in a difficult childbirth. His title D.D. was interpreted as "Done Damned" by some people of Jefferson.
Joe Christmas had no ancestors to trace back to but his whole

life shows the anguish that a sensitive part negro had to go through in the South. His having negro blood was, according to Hines, revelation of God's punishment.

In the first two chapters Lena Grove is the main figure. She walks to Jefferson looking for "Burch," gets to the planing mill, where she was told that he was working, and meets "Bunch," who falls in love with the pregnant woman almost at first sight. The reader is led to believe that the story runs along the line of Lena, Lucas, and Byron, but Christmas, whose sinister glimpse the reader takes in the second chapter, presently looms big and takes the central position. The meeting of Lucas—now Joe Brown—and Lena, which is arranged almost at the end of the story, is no more a climax. Lucas runs away. In the last chapter Lena appears again, but she is with Byron and gives the reader a strange feeling.

In the first two excellent chapters all the important chtracters, except Hightower, are introduced, with the burning Burden house in the background. It is a good start but main characters had to be described in detail separately later and there the construction became weak. There are repetitions in the description of Lena.

Faulkner is good in building up an atmosphere and climax. At the end of the first chapter the tone is serene and quiet and the tempo is slow. Characters do not realize it but the climax is imminent. At the end of the second chapter, too, this kind of climax is to be found.

Faulkner's interest seems to be in expression rather than in plain story-telling. An example of effective description can be found in pp. 386-87. Also one's condition of half consciousness is described well with the use of italics, small letters, and omission of punctuation marks in pp. 192-93.

Such a Faulknerian expression as "moving in his tiny island of abruptly ceased insects" (p. 200) appears. "the rush of sparks

from a rising rocket," describing the rushing out of blood from Christmas's body at the moment of his death is graphic, and it seems more real and effective now, thirty years after the publication of the book.

The frequent occurrence of the word "outrage" (about 25 times) and outraged (about 15 times) leads the reader to wonder if this was not the feeling the author had as he dealt with Christmas and the South. "outrageous" and "outraging" also appear once each. "rage" appears four times.

In this work, too, author's sensitiveness or acuteness in feeling can be felt. He tries to dig down to human nature. The reaction of men and women against pregnant Lena at the beginning of the story is quite real. That is the reason why Joe Christmas, with all his pride and crimes, impresses the reader with his loneliness.

NOTES

[1]W. Faulkner, *Light in August* (New York, 1950), p. 126. Quotations from this work will be shown hereinafter by the page number in parentheses attached immediately after the quotation.

[2]What set Christmas cursing Miz Burden was that she started praying over him. He said, "It was not her fault that she got too old to be any good any more. But she ought to have had better sense than to pray over me." (p. 93)

[3]How much he suffered from the despotic ways of McEachern may be seen in the way he felt and acted soon after he killed this man. It is described as follows: "[he rode back to his house] exulting perhaps at that moment as Faustus had, of having put behind now at once and for all the Shalt Not, of being free at last of honor and law....He cried aloud, 'I have done it! I have done it! I told them I would!'" (p. 180)

[4]Some of the examples are as follows: "the dishes she would prepare for him in secret and then insist on his accepting and eating them in

secret, when he did not want them and he knew that McEachern would not care anyway; the times when...she would try to get herself between him and the punishment which, deserved or not, just or unjust, was impersonal, both the man and the boy accepting it as a natural and inescapable fact until she, getting in the way, must give it an odor, an attenuation, and aftertaste." (p. 146) He felt that Mrs. McEachern "would want him to sin in order that she could help him hide it; that she would at last make such a todo of meaningful whispers and signalsn that McEachern would have to suspect something despite himseelf." (p. 166)

[5]At eighteen when he lived with the McEacherns and lived just like a white, he said, as he lay with Bobbie Allen, who was perhaps the only person he loved in his life, as follows: "I think I got some nigger blood in me," and "I dont know. I believe I have." And Bobbie's answer was, "You're lying." (p. 170)

[6]"Wild too in the pulpit, using religion as though it were a dream. Not a nightmare, but something which went faster than the words in the Book; a sort of cyclone that did not even need to touch the actual earth." (p. 53).